



**Environmental Services Division**  
**Energy and Waste Management Bureau**

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**CRUDE OIL AND GASOLINE PRICES CONTINUE TO RISE**

**DES MOINES** — According to the Iowa DNR's April 15, 2004 fuel price survey, gasoline prices are \$0.09 higher than one month ago, averaging \$1.75 for a gallon of self-serve, regular unleaded gasoline. This is the third highest average since the survey began in 1980, with the highest average price of \$1.77 per gallon recorded in June 2000. The sustained high prices are due to a number of factors, including a strengthening economy (which supports increased demand for gasoline), high crude oil prices and relatively low gasoline inventories.

"The only certainty with gasoline prices is that they will continue to be volatile," said Patti Cale-Finnegan, DNR energy analyst.

To help consumers deal with higher prices, the Iowa DNR has placed tips and information on fuel savings and alternative fuels on its web site at [www.iowdnr.com](http://www.iowdnr.com). "We don't have control over prices, but there are two areas we can affect. One, we can drive more efficiently, and two, we can use alternative fuels such as ethanol and biodiesel that are produced in Iowa," Cale-Finnegan said.

According to the April 15 survey, prices across the state ranged from \$1.60 to \$1.85 per gallon and are \$0.29 higher than this time last year. Currently, retail conventional unleaded gasoline prices in Iowa are \$0.02 lower than the national and regional average of \$1.77 per gallon.

The average price for regular unleaded gasoline blended with ethanol was \$1.73 per gallon. Ethanol-blended gasoline currently represents 61.5 percent of the market share.

Crude oil finished trading on April 14 at \$36.73 per barrel, \$1.45 less than last month. One year ago, crude was \$29.18 per barrel. Crude oil prices have remained high because of trader concerns regarding levels of supply, production cuts by OPEC members, and strong global demand for oil. National crude oil inventory is 6.6 percent higher than the previous year, but below the normal range. The DNR expects crude oil prices to remain volatile while U.S. inventories are relatively low, with prices ranging between \$34 and \$37 per barrel.

The average price of self-serve diesel fuel on April 15 was \$1.70 up \$0.08 from last month and \$0.07 higher than the regional average of \$1.63 per gallon. Diesel fuel was \$1.51 per gallon one year ago.

**Propane**

The April 15 survey found the average retail price of propane was \$1.01 per gallon. This is \$0.05 lower than the previous month and 7 percent above the retail price of propane at this time last year (\$0.94 per gallon).

Midwest propane inventories are nearly 48 percent higher than last year at this time and are within the five-year average.

### **Heating Oil Prices**

The April 15 survey found the average retail price of No. 2 heating oil was \$1.27 per gallon. This is \$0.03 higher than last month and 12 percent above the price of heating oil at this time last year (\$1.13 per gallon). Midwest heating oil inventories are 9 percent lower than this time last year and are within the five-year average.

### **Natural Gas**

Natural gas closed at \$5.90 per million Btu on April 14, \$0.39 higher than last month and 6 percent higher than one year ago. Although the winter season ended with higher natural gas inventory levels than last year, the DNR expects natural gas prices to remain volatile and trade in the same general direction as crude oil prices.

### **MOTOR FUELS SURVEY**

<b>Self-Serve</b>	<b>March 15</b>	<b>April 15</b>	<b>Change</b>
Regular Unleaded	1.66	1.75	+0.09
Regular Unleaded with Ethanol	1.65	1.73	+0.08
Premium Unleaded	1.77	1.86	+0.09
Diesel	1.62	1.70	+0.08
<b>Full-Serve</b>	<b>March 15</b>	<b>April 15</b>	<b>Change</b>
Regular Unleaded	1.81	1.88	+0.07
Regular Unleaded with Ethanol	1.77	1.89	+0.12
Premium Unleaded	1.96	1.99	+0.03
Diesel	1.69	1.73	+0.04

### **HEATING FUELS SURVEY**

	<b>March 15</b>	<b>April 15</b>	<b>Change</b>
Propane	1.06	.90	+0.16
#2 Heating Oil	1.24	1.27	+0.03
Natural Gas	5.51	5.90	+0.39

### **AVERAGE SELF-SERVE UNLEADED PRICES IN MAJOR CITIES**

	<b>March 15</b>	<b>April 15</b>	<b>Change</b>
Ames	1.71	1.73	+0.02
Cedar Rapids	1.58	1.77	+0.19
Council Bluffs	1.64	1.75	+0.11
Davenport	1.60	1.69	+0.09
Des Moines	1.70	1.75	+0.05
Dubuque	1.65	1.76	+0.11
Fort Dodge	1.70	1.78	+0.08
Iowa City	1.69	1.76	+0.07
Sioux City	1.62	1.79	+0.17
Waterloo	1.61	1.69	+0.08
Webster City	1.75	1.81	+0.06
Average Metro Price	1.65	1.75	+0.10

AVERAGE SELF-SERVE UNLEADED PRICES IN RURAL IOWA

	<b>March 15</b>	<b>April 15</b>	<b>Change</b>
Northeast	1.64	1.72	+0.08
Northwest	1.68	1.77	+0.09
Southeast	1.62	1.72	+0.10
Southwest	1.67	1.76	+0.09
Rural Area Average	1.65	1.74	+0.09

WHOLESALE PRICES IN METROPOLITAN AREAS AROUND IOWA

<b>Unleaded (cents per gallon)</b>	<b>March 11</b>	<b>April 8</b>	<b>Change</b>
Des Moines	114.53	116.57	+2.04
Dubuque	115.44	117.44	+2.00
<b>Diesel Fuel (cents per gallon)</b>	<b>March 11</b>	<b>April 8</b>	<b>Change</b>
Des Moines	101.64	104.15	+2.51
Dubuque	102.91	105.11	+2.20